

Homebound Instruction Procedure Manual

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Introduction

Homebound Instruction is a service a school district *may* provide during a temporary period of excused absence not to exceed three months. Excusal from school attendance during this period *may* be granted, "...upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical or other urgent reasons, but the term 'urgent reasons' shall be strictly construed and does not permit irregular attendance." (22 PA. CODE CH. 11 Sec. 25). Homebound instruction is provided for temporary and urgent reasons; it is not a long-term solution. Students on homebound instruction generally are confined to home or a care unit. The School District will not grant requests for partial day Homebound Instruction. A doctor does not "order" homebound instruction but rather provides the diagnosis to enable the school district to make an informed decision on how to best to provide for the student's education.

Homebound Instruction should be used as a last resort after all other options (i.e. modified schedule, work packets, online options, etc.) have been exhausted. *Homebound Instruction is not intended, nor can it be construed, as a method of delivering a full curriculum and may not provide sufficient grades/credits for promotion.* Whether or not a student earns a grade or credit for work done while on Homebound Instruction is based on the school team's review of the Educational Plan and the work submitted.

Homebound Instruction is not a special education placement. However, students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) may receive Homebound Instruction during a temporary excused absence from school attendance after which they will return to school. Homebound Instruction is not to be confused with "*Instruction Conducted in the Home*", which is included in the definition of special education located in the federal regulations (34 CFR §300.39(a)(i)) and is recognized as a placement option on the continuum of alternative placements for students with disabilities (34 CFR §300.115). This option is restricted to students who, because of a severe medical condition or mobility impairment, are unable to leave home to attend school.

Homebound Instruction is also not to be confused with "*Home Schooling*". Section 1327.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code provides for a home education program designed to permit a parent, guardian or legal custodian ("supervisor") who has a high school diploma or its equivalent to conduct a home education program for his or her child or children.

When a school district provides homebound instruction, certain [laws and regulations](#) apply. Students may be *eligible* for Homebound Instruction, but are not *entitled* to it and therefore there are no make-up sessions or compensatory services provided.

Purpose

The purpose of Homebound Instruction is to provide students with some level of instructional services during a temporary period of absence so that upon return to school they can re-engage successfully with their instructional program.

Criteria for Eligibility

1. A student may be excused from school attendance and provided Homebound Instruction for a period not to exceed three (3) months, providing the following criteria are met.

a. The parent /guardian must document urgent reasons by providing medical documentation from a physician for an acute condition that prevents the student from attending school for an expected period of at least three (3) weeks.

b. If the urgent reason is due to a condition that is treated by a specialist, the proper documentation will be required to be completed by the treating specialist. For example: respiratory dysfunction, documentation by a pulmonologist, allergist or immunologist will be requested. If the urgent reason is due to mental/behavioral conditions, documentation by a board certified psychiatrist will be requested.

c. The physician's documentation is not to be construed as prescriptive. The Homebound Coordinator will make a determination regarding the approval of Homebound Instruction if the documentation provided; (1) validates that the student cannot be in a school setting, (2) demonstrates a treatment plan that includes goals/supports that return the student to the school setting as quickly as possible and (3) provides a projected date when the student will return.

d. If additional information is required by the school nurse for clarification of the medical documentation, the parent/guardian must give written consent consistent with FERPA, HIPAA and the Mental Health Act. This consent will permit designated school personnel (school nurse, principal, etc) to speak with the physician regarding information that pertains to the student's inability to attend school.

2. A student may be provided Homebound Instruction on an intermittent basis during short but repeated periods of absences due to exacerbations of a chronic medical condition (authenticated by the medical provider in writing). The student is expected to return to school when the exacerbation subsides. Chronic medical conditions such as sickle cell disease, lymphoma, or cystic fibrosis may qualify a student to be approved for intermittent service. The approval for intermittent Homebound Instruction will be granted for no longer than one (1) school year and will expire at the end of any school year.

3. At any point, the District may request additional information about a student's absences and health status to justify continuation of Homebound Instruction. If the information is not provided, the District may terminate Homebound Instruction and the student shall be marked as truant. Continuation of Homebound Instruction beyond three (3) months requires submission of a new Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction, which may or may not be approved.

Pregnant Students/Teen Parents

Pregnant students are expected to abide by the Wallingford Swarthmore School District attendance policy.

1. If a pregnant student is unable to attend school for a certified medical reason (i.e. requires continuous bed rest, at risk for premature delivery, etc.) the procedure to apply for Homebound Instruction must be followed, if the absences are to extend for more than three (3) weeks.
2. Once a pregnant student delivers her child, her absences from school are to be marked as excused for a maximum of thirty (30) school days. Refer to the School Attendance Procedure for Pregnant Students/ Teen Parent Leave. Once the pregnant student delivers she is considered automatically eligible for Homebound Instruction, following all the same procedures and protocols outlined in this manual.
3. If the student's physician has a certified medical reason for the student to be absent from school for more than six (6) weeks post-partum, the parent and student should initiate the process to obtain homebound services.
4. Homebound Instruction is not to be granted to the student teen parent because of lack of child-care and is not to be granted solely because the pregnant student is in her third trimester.
5. If any assistance is needed in determining the proper procedure for pregnant students or teen parents contact the student's guidance counselor or school administrator for assistance.

Procedures

The timeliness of the school and the District in processing homebound requests is dependent on the completeness and proper documentation of the required **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction**

1. All requests for Homebound Instruction are referred to the School Nurse. The School Nurse will provide the parent/guardian:
 - a. **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction**, current version available online at <http://www.wwsd.org>
2. Completed **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** form is returned to the School Nurse.
 - a. The School Nurse verifies that all parts of the **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** are completed, including the anticipated return to school date.
 - b. The School Nurse may need to contact the medical professional(s), requesting additional information *before* requests are submitted to the Homebound Coordinator.
 - c. **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** and any supporting documents are provided to the Homebound Coordinator, where the request for services are approved or denied by the Homebound Coordinator.
 - d. The Homebound Coordinator e-mails the principal, the school nurse, Guidance Counselor and Registration Office with the decision and, if approved, the number of hours allotted per week and the end date of services. If the request is denied, the student must attend school and shall be marked as truant if he or she does not return to school.
3. If the Homebound Instruction request is approved:
 - a. The **Parent Agreement Letter** is provided to the parent by the Homebound Coordinator.
 - b. If the student is receiving general education, the Guidance Counselor must work with the student's teachers to complete the **Education Plan for Homebound Instruction**, for the student.
 - c. If the student is receiving special education services, the Guidance Counselor meets with the IEP team to complete the **Education Plan for the Homebound Instruction** for the student.
4. Homebound Teacher identification process is initiated by the Guidance Counselor (See "Teacher Identification" section).
5. Homebound Teacher contacts the student's parent/guardian to set up a schedule to deliver instruction. (See "Homebound Teacher General Guidelines").
6. Progress reports and grade shall be submitted to the student's Guidance counselor and the Homebound Coordinator at the termination of Homebound Instruction.

7. Homebound Instruction is automatically terminated at the end of the school year unless the student requires ESY as part of an Individualized Education Plan.

8. Student returns to school at the completion of Homebound Instruction.

Additional Procedures

1. Parent/guardian shall be contacted by the school nurse at least once, half way through the student's scheduled absence, for an update on the Student's progress.

2. Requests for extension of homebound services beyond three (3) months will require a new **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** (See "Renewal or Extension of Homebound Instruction" section).

3. Requests for approval of continuing intermittent homebound service from year to year must be resubmitted in September of every school year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **School Nurse** will:

1. Provide the parent/guardian with the **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** to be completed by the student's treating medical specialist. For behavioral/mental health conditions, which prevent the student from attending school a board certified psychiatrist is the only health care provider who can assess the student and deem that the student is too ill to attend school.
2. Review and submit a copy of the **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** to the Homebound Coordinator.
3. Monitor the medical progress of the student by contact with the parent/guardian at least once, half way through the scheduled absence.
4. Monitor the need for continuation of Homebound Instruction for the student with a new "**Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction**" every three (3) months.
5. Review requests for extension of homebound services beyond three (3) months. Provide the parent with a new **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction**, reinitiating all procedures (See "Renewal or Extension of Homebound Instruction" section).

The **Homebound Coordinator** will:

1. Review all Referrals for Homebound Instruction and any supporting documents provided by the School Nurse.
2. Inform the parent that request for Homebound Instruction was approved or denied using the **Parent Agreement Letter**.
3. Notify the principal, the school nurse, Guidance Counselor and Registration Office with the decision and, if approved, the number of hours allowed and end date of services
4. Review, sign and submit all Homebound Reimbursement forms.
5. Provide the Registration Office with specific dates and times of Homebound Instruction provided so that it is properly reported to Pennsylvania's Department of Education.
6. Attempt to identify tutors at the district level or on the board-approved Homebound Instructors list *only* if a tutor cannot be obtained at the school level.

The **Guidance Counselor** will:

1. Refer all requests for Homebound Instruction from parents/guardians, agencies or other responsible parties to the school nurse.
2. Select and assign homebound teacher(s) to the student upon receipt of notification of approval of Homebound Instruction from the Homebound Coordinator (Refer to the Teacher Identification section).
3. Notify Homebound Coordinator of the name of the homebound teacher(s) for board approval.
4. Work with the appropriate team to develop the **Educational Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** and submit to the Homebound Instructor.
5. Monitor instructional programs provided to students on homebound status; gather materials based on the Education Plan, provide materials to the instructor, collect graded work, collaborate with the school team to determine if grades/credits will be provided for work submitted.
6. Assure that students shall be credited with full attendance during the approved dates for Homebound Instruction and continue to be counted on the school roll.
7. If Necessary, chair an interagency meeting for students requesting Homebound Instruction for behavioral/mental health conditions, or for students who have existing Interagency support, to discuss the request for Homebound Instruction and the need for the agency support.
 - a. Parents/guardians must be informed that students excused from school and provided with Homebound Instruction based on a mental health diagnosis are expected to maintain and report progress on the student's treatment plan from the outside agency.
 - b. Parent/ guardian shall be informed that termination of treatment may result in the discontinuation of Homebound Instruction and designation of truancy on the student attendance report.
 - c. A plan to return to school should be developed at the interagency meeting.
8. If a student returns to school prior to the expiration of the authorized Homebound Instruction period the Guidance Counselor must immediately notify the Homebound Coordinator.

The **Homebound Teacher** will:

1. Review the “Homebound Teacher’s General Guidelines”, and the “Explanation of Forms Used for Homebound Instruction” section, including:
 - a. Parent Agreement Letter
 - b. **Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction**
 - c. **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction**
 - d. **Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction**
2. Ensure that delivery of Homebound Instruction is consistent with the Wallingford Swarthmore School District’s school year calendar; no instruction is conducted over holidays or during the summer break.
3. Instruct up to a maximum of five (5) hours per week for each assigned homebound students.
4. Schedule to provide instruction after school hours, concluding no later than: 7:00 pm for homebound students that are in grades K through 3; 8:00pm for homebound students in grades 4 - 8; and 9:00 pm for homebound students in grades 9 – 12.
 - a. It is advisable that Homebound Instruction should be delivered as close to the end of the school day as possible.
5. Telephone the parent/guardian to establish the dates and times for student Instructional sessions.
6. Contact the parent/guardian prior to each instructional session to ensure that the student is at home and available to receive instruction, prior to arriving at the home.
7. Participate with the special education team and support team in the monitoring of the student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) if the student receives special education.
8. Collect materials from Guidance Counselor, review work and provide grades or specific feedback on individual assignments and submit assignments to the Guidance Counselor.
9. Submit *fully completed* time sheets in a reasonable time frame to the Homebound Coordinator.

IF THE STUDENT IS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The **IEP team** will:

1. Complete the **Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** that aligns with goals and objectives from current IEP.
2. The IEP team must convene if there are any difficulties in the delivery of Homebound Instruction to the student with an IEP.
3. Organize a return plan for the homebound student to return to school reengaged with their instructional program.

The **Parent/Guardian** of the homebound student will:

1. Return the completed **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** form to the school nurse for review.
2. Arrange with the assigned homebound teacher dates and times that would be optimal for instruction of the child.
3. Sign the **Parent Agreement for Homebound Instruction** letter, and return to homebound teacher upon arrival of first homebound session.
4. Ensure that a responsible adult is present in the home for the instructional hour.
5. Eliminate all distractions such as TV, radio, pets and other young children during instructional and study time.
6. Attempt to arrange doctor appointments, therapy, etc. so they do not conflict with the scheduled instruction when possible. Notify the teacher by 8:30 am to cancel instructional time if the student is too ill to be taught or if any other persons in the home are suffering from a contagious illness.
7. Provide the school nurse with progress updates of the student, at least once, half way through the scheduled absence for Homebound Instruction.
8. Initial **Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction** after each instructional session.
9. Be responsible for submission to the school nurse a new **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** before the completion of three (3) months of instruction, in the event that the student will require an extension of Homebound Instruction beyond the time previously approved.

The **Principal or Assistant Principal** will:

1. Ensure that Guidance Counselors are coordinating the **Educational Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction.**
2. Ensure That Teachers are providing instructional information and materials to the Guidance Counselor in a timely manner.
3. Review grades and teaching hours prior to issuance of report cards or entry on the official student records.

The **Office of Special Education** will:

1. Serve as the Homebound Coordinators
2. Contact board approved homebound instructors only after guidance counselors have offered the position to staff members at the school level and no one has accepted.
3. Ensure that the IEP team is coordinating with the Guidance Counselor in the development and monitoring of the **Educational Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction.**

Teacher Identification

1. It is the responsibility of the Guidance Counselor to identify a teacher for Homebound Instruction.
2. In elementary schools the student's teacher of record shall be asked first regarding becoming the student's homebound teacher.
3. For students receiving special education in elementary school, the student's special education teacher of record shall be asked first.
4. In middle schools & high schools the student's teacher(s) for the area(s) in which the student will be receiving instruction is approached first regarding becoming the student's homebound teacher.
5. If the position(s) of homebound teacher(s) is unfilled at this point, the position for homebound teacher shall be advertised throughout the school.
6. If the position(s) of homebound teacher(s) remains unfilled, the Homebound Coordinator shall contact board approved tutors.
7. While the position is unfilled, the school may continue to reach out to the student and family and, if appropriate to the health status of the student, engage the student by methods such as learning packets, e-mail, Skype, online courses etc., until a teacher begins Homebound Instruction. Again, students may be *eligible* for Homebound Instruction, but are not *entitled* to it and therefore no make-up sessions or compensatory services will be provided.

Instructional Hours

Homebound Instruction is intended as a temporary accommodation to keep the student engaged in the school program. It is not intended, nor can it be construed, as a method of delivering the full curriculum.

1. If the Homebound Coordinator approves the request for Homebound Instruction for a minimum of four (4) weeks, but less than three (3) months, Homebound Instruction will consist of:

- a. Elementary Level (K-5): Three (3) hours weekly
- b. Middle School Level (6-8): Four (4) hours weekly.
- c. High School Students (9-12): Five (5) hours weekly.

2. If the Homebound Coordinator approves a request for an extension of homebound services after the completion of three (3) months, instructional hours may consist of Intermittent Homebound Instruction.

3. **Intermittent Homebound Instruction** may be provided for students with chronic medical conditions that, although under treatment, have episodes of exacerbation and abatement of symptoms, resulting in recurring periodic absences. The absences must be for the condition that the Intermittent Homebound Instruction was approved.

Homebound Instruction will consist of:

- a. Elementary students (K-5) are to receive three (3) hours of instruction per the equivalent of 5 days of absences.
- b. Middle School Level (6-8): Four (4) hours of instruction per the equivalent of 5 days of absences.
- c. High School Students (9-12): Five (5) hours of instruction per the equivalent of 5 days of absences.

Example 1: If an elementary student has scheduled kidney dialysis for 3 days per week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday), he can receive Intermittent Homebound Instruction once he has missed 5 days of school. Therefore, after the second consecutive Wednesday he would have had five (5) days of excused absences because of his chronic condition and would be entitled to two (3) hours of instruction.

Example 2: A high school student in grade 9-11 has sickle cell disease and experiences a period of sickle cell crisis that lasts for a period of ten (10) school days. Once the student feels better she would be entitled to six (10) hours of Intermittent Homebound Instruction.

Extended School Year (ESY) Programs

1. A student with an IEP who is receiving Homebound Instruction that is approved to continue to the end of the school year and whose IEP team has determined is eligible for ESY may be eligible for ESY Homebound Instruction.

a. ESY homebound service must have been authorized through the usual Homebound Instruction approval process.

2. ESY Homebound Instruction teachers must be selected through the ESY teacher selection process as part of the regular ESY program

Renewal or Extension of Approved Service

1. The school nurse will contact the parent/guardian of the student receiving Homebound Instruction at least half way through the scheduled absence (i.e., if a student is scheduled to be absent for 12 weeks, there should be contact made between the nurse and the parent/guardian by at least 6 weeks).

a. If a treating medical specialist (a psychiatrist in cases of mental illness) feels that a student will require more than 3 months of Homebound Instruction a new **Physician's Referral for Homebound** will be required.

b. The school nurse will explain to the parent/guardian that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to see that the required referral forms are completed and presented to the school in a timely manner. The school nurse will inform the parent/guardian that if the **Physician's Referral for Homebound** is incomplete or does not demonstrate an urgent medical reason for excusal of school attendance, the request will not be approved.

2. At any point the District may request additional information to clarify the need for Homebound Instruction. Additional information requested may include, but is not limited to, the treatment plan, goals and objectives of treatment, and when student can be expected to return to school.

3. If the information is not provided the District may change the attendance status of the student from excused to unexcused followed by a truancy referral.

4. The **Physician's Referral for Homebound** must be completed and signed before the three (3) month period expires in order for service to continue without interruption.

5. The new **Physician's Referral for Homebound** must be submitted for approval to the Homebound Coordinator.

6. If the school nurse does not receive a new **Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction** is to be discontinued by the school and the student shall be marked as truant if the student does not return to school.

7. Students who are receiving Intermittent Homebound Instruction will require one (1) Physician's Referral for Homebound Instruction (SEC-137A) for each school year.

8. If a student returns to school prior to the expiration of the authorized Homebound Instruction period the Guidance Counselor must immediately notify the Homebound Coordinator.

Student Grades, Attendance and Records

1. Homebound teachers must grade each individual assignment or provide some type of written feedback for completed work. Grades or written feedback should be submitted by the Homebound teacher to the Guidance Counselor.

2. Homebound teachers will enter grades or written feedback for individual assignments in the **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction**. Whether or not a student earns a grade or credit for work done while on Homebound Instruction is based on the school team's review of the Educational Plan and the work submitted.

3. All grades and/or Credits and teaching hours will be reviewed by the Principal or Assistant Principal prior to issuance of report cards or entry on the official student records.

4. Students who are approved to receive Homebound Instruction are to be marked present.

Homebound Teacher's General Guidelines

1. Review carefully the materials enclosed in the "Homebound Procedure Manual" before visiting the home.
2. Delivery of Homebound Instruction must be consistent with the Wallingford Swarthmore School District's calendar. Homebound Instruction is not to be delivered on days that school is not in session; school holidays, weekends, summer (except in the case of ESY eligible students).
3. Instruct up to a maximum of four (5) hours per week for each assigned homebound student depending on the students grade level.
4. Schedule to provide instruction after school hours, concluding no later than: 7:00 pm for homebound students who are in grades K through 3; 8:00pm for homebound students in grades 4- 8; and 9:00pm for homebound students in grades 9-12.
 - a. It is advisable that Homebound Instruction be delivered as close to the end of the school day as possible.
5. When preparing lesson plans for Homebound Instruction sessions:
 - a. Refer to **Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** as a guide for instruction.
 - b. Instruction in the designated courses will be based on the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District's curriculum or and/or the student's IEP goals.
 - c. Textbooks and other instructional materials are to be provided by the Guidance Counselor at the student's home school.
 - d. All Homebound students are to participate in all state and District assessments including the PSSA, the PASA , the Keystones and any local assessments. Arrangements for test administration are to be made with the homebound student's Guidance Counselor at the home school.
6. Homebound teachers will enter grades or written feedback for individual assignments in the **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction**. Whether or not a student earns a grade or credit for work done while on Homebound Instruction is based on the school team's review of the Educational Plan and the work submitted.
7. Grades for student work are to be reviewed by the principal or administrative designee prior to issuance of report card grades or entry on the official student records.
8. Homebound teachers may be expected to participate in IEP meetings for students receiving Special Education services and support team in the development and monitoring of the student's Individual Education Plan(IEP) while the student is receiving Homebound Instruction.

9. Documentation of Homebound Instruction via the **Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** and the **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** will be maintained by the Guidance Counselor at the student's home school.

11. The homebound student's Guidance Counselor at the home school will also need to be informed in writing if there are any difficulties in delivering instruction are encountered or if there is a breach in the Parent Agreement.

12. The Homebound Instruction hours must be logged on the **Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction**. The **Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction** should be initialed by the homebound student's parent/guardian and signed by the Homebound Coordinator.

Explanation of Forms used for Homebound Instruction

Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction:

1. Should be completed by the Guidance Counselor in coordination with the student's teachers and/or IEP team, once approval for Homebound Instruction is received from the Homebound Coordinator.

a. The student's home school teacher(s) or the IEP Team are required to provide the information to complete the Current Educational Program section.

b. The student's teachers or the IEP team, are required to provide the information to complete the Proposed Educational Plan section.

2. A completed copy is to be given to the assigned homebound teacher and a copy should remain in the student's cumulative file and the student's confidential file in the Office of Special Education if the student has an IEP.

Parent Agreement Letter:

1. Should be provided to the homebound student's parent/guardian upon authorization of homebound hours.
2. The parent must sign and return to the homebound teacher upon arrival of first homebound session.
3. A signed copy of the Parent Agreement shall be kept at the homebound student's Cumulative File.

Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction:

1. Required to be completed by the homebound teacher(s) at least once during any report period (or convalescence period of shorter duration).
2. Curriculum Areas reflected on the **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** should be consistent with the areas designated on the **Education Plan for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction**.
3. The **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** is to be reviewed and verified by the principal or the administrative designee before the issuance of any formal grades.
4. A copy of the **Progress Report for Students Receiving Homebound Instruction** may be given to the parent/guardian after the principal or the administrative designee's review and verification. A copy must also be maintained in the student's pupil pocket.

Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction:

1. A teacher providing Homebound Instruction will record his/her hours worked on an **Reimbursement for Homebound Instruction** with parent signature.
2. The Homebound Coordinator must sign each form for time and attendance monitoring purposes and submit for payment.
3. The teacher will compute a travel time allowance of 15 minutes per visit per student who is provided Homebound Instruction.